

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation. But the major point is that it is illegal and unjust. This is clearly a partisan decision; 97% of their political contributions go to Republican candidates. Why can Sinclair force its affiliates to do this, while other news stations refuse to run even commercials for Fahrenheit 9/11. You should all be truly ashamed of failing in your commitment to foster a free and equal public sphere in which civil society can engage in debates on the most important issues of our day.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.